

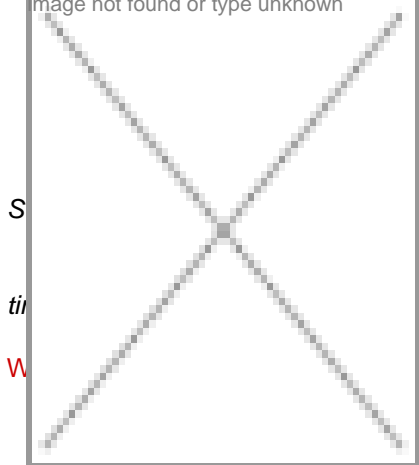
Beckman Coulter India eyes new frontiers

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—Dr SP Chandrashekar, MD, Beckman Coulter India, Mumbai



Beckman Coulter India, a wholly-owned subsidiary of Beckman Coulter, US, is one of the leading manufacturers of biomedical testing instrument systems, tests and suppliers that simplify and automate laboratory processes. Diagnostic and life science research portfolios of the company have been the major growth contributors to its revenue, which tripled during the last fiscal 2008-09. Findings of the BioSpectrum Top 20 BioSupplier growth of Beckman Coulter India.

Dr SP Chandrashekar, MD, Beckman Coulter India, in an exclusive interview with BioSpectrum shares more about the robust growth of the company during these tough times.

How did you steer the company's growth?

Beckman Coulter had been operating in India through indirect presence since many years. Beckman Coulter India's revenue growth had not been commensurate with the market growth. However, since 2006 and especially in the year 2008 we reached a stage where on a three-year compound annual growth rate (CAGR) basis we grew our life science research (LSR) business at a rate over 40 percent year-on-year which is far above the market growth rate for the

period.

As for initiatives that enabled this growth—we enhanced our focus on various key segments and provided radically different customer support and technical service which were based on transparency and customer satisfaction.

What are the progress that happened in centrifugation space?

In general, we continued to retain and grow with our existing base of customers who reposed and renewed their faith in us by giving repeat business. At the same time, we had some new opportunities in the newly set up research organizations such as Indian Institutes of Science Education and Research (IISERs) as well as non-traditional customers for our high-end centrifuges. In addition, breakthroughs came from high level research institutes (including the Indian Institutes of Technology (IITs)) and others who chose Beckman Coulter's products for their nanotechnology research units.

To what extent the diagnostics and LSR portfolios contribute to the growth of the company?

The contributions from clinical diagnostics and LSR have been consistent with the focus and attention paid to the respective customer segments and addressing the needs thereof. In terms of growth rate, I would say both the portfolios have done well at almost the same rates on a three-year basis, although, there may be a very small year-on-year differences in the individual contributions. The outlook for both our businesses is bright and any impact otherwise would only be a result of the current global and Indian economic scenarios, which would affect all the players in this space.

What is the status of the new Particle Characterization laboratory of Mumbai?

The new lab has been highly appreciated by our customers. The lab serves as a place for us to conduct pre-sales demos to prospective customers as well as to provide post-sales application training to existing customers. We also serve our industrial customers, especially the biopharma and pure pharma companies, at this site by helping them solve practical process problems and develop methods for the various new applications that they seek and create SOPs for these methods.

What are the strategies adopted for the fiscal year 2009-10 to further improve the growth?

We will continue our customer-focused approach to the market by offering newer technology-based products like nanotechnology-based particle characterization products, protein characterization products and flow cytometry product offerings. We will also explore newer customer segments through our products and services to further enhance our growth in the coming period ahead.

What is the current state of global biosuppliers market?

As one goes around the country meeting existing customers and new prospects, one gets to hear that all the traditional global biosuppliers are focusing on India. The year 2009 has seen major export projects/orders and traditional short-term CRO projects getting delayed, which will impact the Indian biosupplier market, and might lead to some degree of consolidation of suppliers by the end of the year or certainly in the first half of 2010, if this trend continues.

Pradeep Kumar